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# CONFERENCE *connection*

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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

June 9, 2019

## A Spirit of Connection, Openness, and Joy!

As we celebrate Pentecost when the apostles received the Holy Spirit, providing the strength to be bold, to scatter, and to witness throughout the world. Although we did not celebrate Pentecost at our recent Annual Meeting, we did experience the spirit and we strengthened the connections that encourage us to go forth and witness to God's love throughout the Conference.

From the beginning rousing singing of "No matter who, no matter what, no matter where you are in the journey of life; you're welcome, welcome in this place..." (*No Matter* by Roger P. Miller) and throughout the Annual Meeting, there was a spirit of connection, openness, and joy! One hundred and thirty-six people came together from all parts of the Conference: representing 34 churches and all 5 states. It was a time for fellowship, worship, learning, and business. There is no doubt that the Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, was a highlight as he challenged us to be a voice that needs to be heard in today's world. With the opportunity to choose between 24 different workshops, participants were busy and engaged!

Thank you to the Planning Committee: Rebecca Seldomridge, chairperson; Glenna Shepherd, Marsha Brown, Gavin Warren, James Bowman Harris, Carrole Moss, and Heather Fosburgh. Thank you to Pleasant Hill Community Church and their "Home Team" with a multitude of volunteers that assisted with logistics, preparation, hospitality, and active participation. Thank you to Uplands Village that provided extra space and hosted the Friday evening pig-roast. Thank you to the Conference officers:



J.R. Finney, Rebecca Seldomridge, Gavin Warren and Heith Battles who provided leadership for the business sessions. Thank you to our staff: Don Harris, Carrole Moss, and a huge thank you to Heather Fosburgh who kept all the details in order.

Thank you also - to those of you who attended and shared your spirit of openness and the desire to connect with others while learning from and sharing in mutuality as we seek to be the Southeast Conference together. It was an uplifting and joyful gathering! I give praise to God!

Blessings, Char Burch,  
Transitional Conference Minister

## Annual Meeting Wrap-Up

The official Reports to the Annual Meeting are available in the Program provided to attendees and available [on our website](#).

## Elections

During the Annual Meeting, elections were held. The following is the sale as elected for the coming year:

### Board of Directors

- Moderator: Rev. J.R. Finney - Covenant Community Church, Birmingham, AL
- Vice Moderator: Ugena Whitlock - Pilgrimage UCC, Marietta, GA
- Secretary: Gavin Warren – Holy Trinity Community Church, Nashville, TN
- Treasurer: Heith Battles – Covenant Community Church, Birmingham, AL
- Commission on Ministry: Rev. Ann Michelle Rogers-Brigham - Safe Harbor Family Church, Clinton, MS
- Nominating Committee: Rev. James Bowman Harris – United Church of Cookeville, Cookeville, TN
- Personnel Committee: Penny Hensley – Phoenix Christian Church UCC, Wildersville, TN
- Stewardship & Finance Committee: Juanita Simmons – Victory for the World, Stone Mountain, GA

## Members-at-Large

- Rev. Ginnie Ferrell – First Congregational UCC, Atlanta, GA
- Hannah Mays – United Church of Cookeville, Cookeville, TN
- Rev. Jennifer Crane Crenshaw – Brookmeade Congregational UCC, Nashville, TN
- Rev. Raymonda Speller – Community Congregational UCC, Montgomery, AL
- Rev. Bennie Liggins – United UCC, Montgomery, AL
- Holly Kendal – Emmanuel UCC, Greenville, SC

## Conference Nominating Committee

- Rev. Richard Barham – Spirit of the Cross, Huntsville, AL
- Pastor James Banks – Bethany UCC, Thomasville, GA
- Cindy Crocker – Safe Harbor, Clinton, MS
- Jodi Usher – Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson, SC

We also appreciate those who completed their terms on the Board of Directors or needed to resign during the past year: Tony England, Vanessa Robb, Rebecca Seldomridge, Sean Kilpatrick, Scott Williamson, and Shannon Michel Pater.

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## 2019 Ordination Anniversaries

During our 53rd Annual Meeting in Pleasant Hill, TN the Southeast Conference recognized 35 clergy with special ordination anniversaries, expressing appreciation for their years of service. The list is [available on our website](#).

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You can see many more photos on our [Facebook page!](#)

## Workshop Presentations

Thank you to all those who both presented and participated in the many and varied workshops during Annual Meeting. Some of the workshops were primarily group discussions or Q&A sessions, while others included visual presentations and handouts. If you would like more information about a specific workshop, please contact the presenter directly. A list of the workshops is [available on our website](#).

## News from the Conference Office



## Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2019. We encourage you to

include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

### Week of June 3

- Real Inspiration Ministries; Decatur, Georgia
- Christy Bonner
- Andrew Frierson Jr
- Glenna Shepherd
- Dorothy Gager

### Week of June 10

- Virginia Highland Church; Atlanta, Georgia
- Members in Discernment and Persons in Exploration
- 53rd Annual Meeting, Southeast Conference
- Adrian Boone
- Ray Speller

### Week of June 17

- Union UCC; Tougaloo, Mississippi
- Vaughn Crowe Tipton
- John Gill
- Jean Norton
- Katie Kilpatrick

## **Churches in Transition**

Central Congregational, Atlanta, GA; United Church of Huntsville, Huntsville AL; First Congregational, Birmingham AL; Pilgrimage, Marietta GA; First Congregational Christian, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Trinity Congregational, Athens AL

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## **Ecclesiastical Councils**

You are invited to two Ecclesiastical Councils on Monday, June 17 at 6:30 pm at Kirkwood United Church of Christ (100 Rogers St NE, Atlanta, GA 30317).

- **Stephanie Milton** is a Member of Discernment at First Congregational UCC, Atlanta GA. Stephanie is currently serving as a Chaplain Fellow at the VA in Atlanta.
- **Ellen Green** is a Member of Discernment with Pilgrimage

Congregational UCC, Marietta GA. Ellen is currently serving as the Director of Children, Youth and Families Faith Formation at Lynnurst Congregational UCC in Minneapolis, MN.

If you are not able to physically come to Kirkwood UCC, you can join the EC through Zoom (<https://zoom.us/j/332424529> by computer 1-646-558-8656 by phone.

Ecclesiastical Councils are the last step for those preparing for Ordained Ministry in the United Church of Christ. Stephanie and Ellen will spend some time describing their journey and call to ministry, after which there will be a time for those present to be able to ask questions before voting on approving them for Ordination on and behalf of the United Church of Christ. We hope you can join us, either in person or virtually.

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## SEC at General Synod in Milwaukee

Will you be at General Synod? We would love to connect with you while you are in Milwaukee! Please fill out [this online form](#) to let us know you will be at Synod. If we have any special guests at our Caucus or any evening events we will send out information.

The Conference Delegates are:

- J.R Finney, Covenant UCC, Birmingham AL
- Kriss (Mi Yong) Choi, Open Community, Duluth, GA
- Cindy Barto, Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, GA
- Jeremy Rutledge, Circular Congregational UCC, Charleston, SC
- Carrole Moss, Victory for the World Church, Stone Mountain, GA
- Thomas Mitchell, Church of the Savior, Knoxville, TN

Hope to see you there!



## Conference Calendar

### Staff Meeting

June 14 @ 9:00 am - 10:30 am EDT  
Online Virtual Meeting

**Ordination of Thomas Coates**

June 16 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm CDT

Safe Harbor Family Church, Clinton, MS

**Ecclesiastical Councils for Stephanie Milton and Ellen Green**

June 17 @ 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm EDT

Kirkwood UCC, Atlanta, GA

**UCC General Synod**

June 21 - June 25

Milwaukee, WI

**Contact Us**Conference Minister: **Rev. Char Burch;** [cburch@secucc.org](mailto:cburch@secucc.org)Assoc. Conference Minister: **Rev. Heather Fosburgh;** [hbardole@secucc.org](mailto:hbardole@secucc.org)Generosity Coordinator: **Min. Carrole Moss;** [cmoss@secucc.org](mailto:cmoss@secucc.org)Director of Communications: **Don Harris;** [dharris@secucc.org](mailto:dharris@secucc.org)*Copyright © 2019 Southeast Conference, UCC, All rights reserved.*

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